

Make An INUKSUK

by Michele Reyzer

The *Inuit*, a group of people native to the Arctic, used stones as signposts. They stacked the stones in a certain way to mark safe trails, special places, and good sites for hunting and fishing. The Inuit called each of these stone figures an *inuksuk*—which means “something that acts in place of a person.”

You can find *inuksuit* (the plural of *inuksuk*) along road-sides all across northern Canada. They come in different shapes and sizes. But most are built to look like stone people with outstretched arms that point the way.

A small *inuksuk* can liven up your garden or mark a special place in your home. Here's how to make one for yourself.

1. Leave no stone unturned.

Go outside and look for stones, rocks, and pebbles about the size of your hand or smaller. Flat ones are best for stacking. (Get permission before taking stones from someone

else's property. You can also buy stones from craft stores and garden centers.) Once you have collected your stones, you may want to scrub them clean.

2. Get your balance.

Take some time to play with your stones. Move them around. See which ones balance best on top of each other. You may want to build your *inuksuk* exactly where it will be displayed, such as in your garden or on a desk, windowsill, or bookshelf.

Don't be discouraged if your *inuksuk* falls over at first. You might need to

rearrange the stones—maybe even turn some of them over.

3. Keep it standing.

If you're worried that the stones might still topple over, you can use craft glue or bits of modeling clay to hold them together. Glue works best for flat stones. Use clay with the rough and uneven stones that don't balance very well. Be sure to let the glue and clay dry overnight.

Rangers: We'd love to see photos of your *inuksuk* creations! We may even print a few of them in an upcoming issue of *Ranger Rick*. Send photos to

Ranger Rick
11100 Wildlife Center Dr.
Reston, VA 20190-5362
E-mail: rick@nwf.org

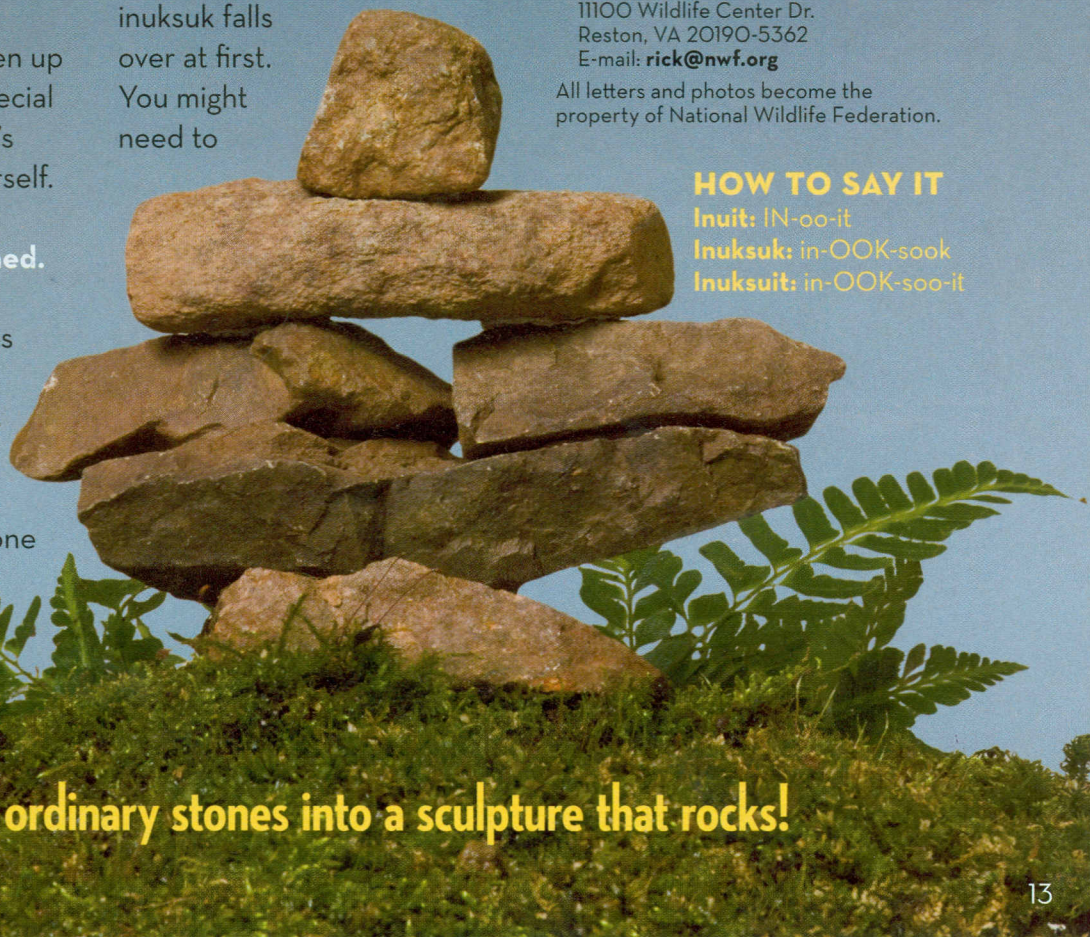
All letters and photos become the property of National Wildlife Federation.

HOW TO SAY IT

Inuit: IN-oo-it

Inuksuk: in-OOK-sook

Inuksuit: in-OOK-soo-it



Turn ordinary stones into a sculpture that rocks!